

Message Text

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PAGE 01 ADDIS 04560 161512Z

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C O N F I D E N T I A L ADDIS ABABA 4560

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS, PINT, ET

SUBJECT: STUDENTS STEP UP ANTI-DIRG ACTIVITIES

REF: ADDIS ABABA 4203

SUMMARY: EMBOLDENED BY EPMG'S RELATIVE PASSIVITY OF LATE AND HARSHNESS OF ANTI-GOVERNMENT CRITICISM IN UNDERGROUND PAMPHLETS AND MININFO MEDIA, AS WELL AS INCREASING UNREST, ADDIS STUDENTS HAVE STEPPED UP ANTI-DIRG DEMONSTRATIONS. END SUMMARY.

1. SINCE THE VICTORY DAY CELEBRATION IN ADDIS ABABA, STUDENTS HERE HAVE CONDUCTED AN AVERAGE OF ONE OR TWO DEMONSTRATIONS PER DAY AGAINST THE EPMG. MOST DEMONSTRATIONS HAVE BEEN FAIRLY SMALL, INVOLVING GENERALLY NOT MORE THAN A FEW HUNDRED INDIVIDUALS. THEY USUALLY FOLLOW STANDARD FORM: STUDENTS CARRY PLACARDS WHILE MARCHING THROUGH CITY STREETS SHOUTING ANTI-DIRG SLOGANS AND DEMANDING AN IMMEDIATE RETURN TO CIVILIAN RULE. ON SOME OCCASIONS STUDENTS CHANTED SLOGANS IN FAVOR OF APPARENTLY GROWING UNDERGROUND MARXIST EPRP (ETHIOPIAN PEOPLES REVOLUTIONARY PARTY).

2. NOTABLE EXCEPTION TO ABOVE PATTERN OCCURRED MONDAY, APRIL 12TH, IN ADDIS MERCATO. ONE SOURCE, WHO WAS PRESENT, CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 02 ADDIS 04560 161512Z

REPORTED THAT THREE OR FOUR THOUSAND STUDENTS AND UNEMPLOYED

WORKERS TOOK PART IN ONE DEMONSTRATION AND THAT SOME 600 PARTICIPANTS WERE ARRESTED BY POLICE. SOURCE ASSERTS THAT HE SUBSEQUENTLY VISITED THREE ADDIS POLICE STATIONS WHERE ARRESTED STUDENTS WERE BEING HELD AND WITNESSED PARENTS STANDING OUTSIDE OF THE STATION SHOUTING ANTI-DIRG SLOGANS AND DEMANDING RELEASE OF THEIR CHILDREN. SAME SOURCE REPORTED TODAY, APRIL 15TH, THAT MOST OF ARRESTED STUDENTS HAVE BEEN RELEASED, ALTHOUGH SOME WHO WERE THOUGHT TO BE LEADERS OF THE DEMONSTRATION HAVE BEEN KEPT FOR QUESTIONING. WE KNOW OF AT LEAST TWO OTHER DEMONSTRATIONS BY STUDENTS IN ADDIS SAME DAY.

3. BRITISH EMBASSY INFORMED US OF PROBLEM IN ADDIS BRITISH-RUN WINGATE SCHOOL. SINCE WINGATE'S 11TH GRADERS WERE ONLY 11TH GRADERS IN COUNTRY ATTENDING CLASS (NOT INCLUDING MISSION-RUN SCHOOLS) OUTSIDE STUDENT AGITATORS ATTACKED SCHOOL ON APRIL 2ND AND ATTEMPTED TO FORCE WINGATE 11TH GRADERS TO LEAVE CLASS. WINGATE STUDENTS SUBSEQUENTLY HELD MEETING AND DECIDED TO JOIN CLASS BOYCOTT. STUDENTS THEN TOOK UP COLLECTION WHICH TOTALLED SOME ETH\$120 TO BE USED FOR STUDENT ACTIVITIES. SAME STUDENT GROUP WAS SUBSEQUENTLY ABLE TO DISTRIBUTE ETH\$1200 FOR STUDENT ACTIVITIES, LEAVING BRITISH SCHOOL AUTHORITIES TO BELIEVE OUTSIDE MONEY BEING USED TO FINANCE STUDENTS. BRITISH EMBASSY STATES THAT AT ABOUT THE SAME TIME A STUDENT FROM MEDHANE ALEM SECONDARY SCHOOL IN ADDIS WAS ARRESTED POLICE CARRYING ETH\$2,000. SEVERAL SOURCES HAVE ALLEGED THAT SOVIET AND OTHER EAST BLOC EMBASSIES ARE SUPPLYING FUNDS FOR STUDENT ACTIVITIES. COMMENT: CURRENT FASHION AMONG STUDENT ACTIVISTS, INSPIRED BY EPRP'S UNDERGROUND PAMPHLET DEOCRACIA, IS TO COMPARE THE EPRP TO FASCIST ITALY AND/OR NAZI GERMANY. THIS HAS ALSO BEEN ENCOURAGED BY RECENT ARTICLES IN "REVOLUTIONARY COLUMN" OF GOVERNMENT-CONTROLLED AMHARIC DAILY, ADDIS ZEMEN, WHICH IS OPEN TO OUTSIDE CONTRIBUTORS. WHILE MOST OF THE CONTRIBUTORS TO THE REVOLUTIONARY COLUMN HAVE WANTED TO DEBATE EFFICACY OF ARMING PEASANTS FOR THE CLASS STRUGGLE

AND DESIRABILITY OF "SOCIALIST DEMOCRATIC RIGHTS VERSUS FULL DEMOCRATIC RIGHTS", TO OUR-(AND ETHIOPIANS)-SURPRISE PAPER HAS PRINTED SEVERAL RECENT ARTICLES STRONGLY CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 03 ADDIS 04560 161512Z

CRITICAL OF THE DIRG, COMPARING ETHIOPIAN SOCIALISM TO FASCISM. THESE CHARGES HAVE ALSO BEEN ECHOED IN THE NUMEROUS UNDERGROUND PAMPHLETS CIRCULATING AROUND ADDIS, SO THAT STUDENT DEMONSTRATORS WHO USED TO CHANT "DOWN WITH THE DIRG" HAVE MODIFIED SLOGAN TO READ "DOWN WITH THE FASCIST DIRG. END COMMENT. HUMMEL

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